



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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TERRITORY OF HAWAII ON PAR WITH STATES ON FEDERAL AID PROGRAMS

On July 1, 1957, the Territory of Hawaii will take its place beside the several States as far as Federal Aid for the restoration of wildlife and sport fishing is concerned, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton said today. The change in status is the result of recent congressional action.

At the present time, Hawaii is eligible for a total of \$50,000 in fish and game restoration funds each year, with no matching funds required. Under its new status the Territory will be eligible for varying amounts which will approximate \$88,000 a year but which must be matched with territorial funds of one-fourth of the amount allotted.

Federal Aid funds for the restoration of game (Pittman-Robertson) are obtained from an 11 percent excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition. Funds for fish restoration (Dingell-Johnson) come from a 10 percent excise tax on sport fishing equipment such as rods, reels, creels and artificial lures. The funds are distributed to the States using formulas based on the area and the number of license holders in each. States are reimbursed up to 75 percent of the cost of acceptable restoration projects.

Hawaii will be eligible for the designated minimum amounts, set at one-half of one percent of the total amount to be distributed for game restoration and one percent of that to be distributed on fish restoration programs. At present this will amount to about \$60,000 on game programs and \$28,000 on fish work. These amounts will vary from year to year.

The Territory of Hawaii has a land area of approximately 6,500 square miles--slightly larger than Connecticut. It issues annually about 4,500 hunting licenses and about 2,000 fishing licenses. Considerable salt water fishing is done without a license.

Pheasants are the dominant game birds on the islands, which also have valley quail, the chukar partridge and several species of doves. Big game animals are the axis deer and feral (domestic, gone wild) sheep and goats.

Pressing problems include ways and means of saving the Hawaiian or nene goose from extinction, a serious condition in the pheasant world which is causing the hatching of deformed birds, and the predations of the mongoose. Only 24 nene geese are known to exist in the wild, with possibly a few in captivity.

To develop fresh-water fishing opportunities of the islands, consideration has been given to the introduction of rainbow trout, smallmouth bass, black crappie, channel catfish, and a South American catfish into waters now lacking suitable sport fish. Similarly, to improve inshore salt-water fishing, introduction of shallow water snappers and groupers, now conspicuously absent in what appears to be favorable habitat, is being studied. Life history studies, food habit studies, and a fisherman harvest survey are being conducted.

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